



# Seven Principles of Kwanzaa

## Drumming Ensemble

*Suggested Grades: 3-5*

Elisabeth Ross

### National Core Arts Standards

- #1 – Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- #2 – Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- #3 – Refine and complete artistic work.
- #11- Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

### Objectives

- Identify and Discuss the seven principles of Kwanzaa.
- Layer the seven principles of Kwanzaa rhythmically to create a drumming ensemble.

### Materials

Tubanos  
Variety of World Music Unpitched Percussion Instruments.



### ELISABETH ROSS

Elisabeth is a K-6 General Music teacher in the Iowa City Community School District. She has certification in Orff and in World Music Drumming. When not teaching she is active in community theater and performs with The Quire of Eastern Iowa.

### Lesson Summary:

Students will identify and discuss the seven principles of Kwanza before layering these words together rhythmically to create a drumming ensemble.

### Suggested Teaching Process:

#### Experience One – Seven Principles of Kwanzaa

1. Discuss the history of Kwanza.
2. Optional: Read [Kevin's Kwanzaa](#) by Lisa Bullard and Constanza Basaluzzo – a picture book about the seven principles of Kwanzaa.
3. Identify the seven principles of Kwanza, discussing each.
  - Umoja – Unity (**oo-MO-jah**)
  - Ujima – Collective Work and Responsibility (**oo-GEE-mah**)
  - Kugichaguila – Self Determination (**koo-gee-cha-goo-LEE-yah**)
  - Ujamaa – Cooperative Economics (**oo-JAH-mah**)
  - Nia – Purpose (**nee-YAH**)
  - Kuumba – Creativity (**koo-OOM-bah**)
  - Imani – Faith (**ee-MAH-nee**)

#### Experience Two– Creating Vocal Ostinati

1. Review each of the seven principles of Kwanzaa and the significance of each.
2. Speak each word rhythmically with body percussion - pre-teaching students' instrument parts.
3. Divide students into groups pairing different rhythms together.

**Grouping Suggestions** – *these are just suggestions on rhythms that work well together.*

- Umoja & Ujima
- Nia, Kuumba, & Kugichaguilia

- Ujamaa & Imani
4. Repeat until students can speak and perform all seven layers on body percussion.

### Experience Three– Drumming Ensemble

1. Review each of the seven principles of Kwanzaa and the significance of each.
2. Review the words rhythmically with body percussion
3. Transfer to percussion instruments – pairing different rhythms together.
4. Repeat until students have layered all seven parts.



### Suggested Final Performance

- Nia
- Kuumba
- Ujamaa
- Umoja
- Ujima
- Imani
- Kugichajulia

### References:

A&E Television Networks. (2021, December 8). *Kwanzaa*. History.com.  
<https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/kwanzaa-history>

Smithsonian. (n.d.). *Kwanzaa*. National Museum of African American History and Culture.  
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/initiatives/kwanzaa>



# The Seven Principles

E. Ross

$\text{♩} = 120$

Medium Drum  $\frac{4}{4}$  —

Low Drum  $\frac{4}{4}$  —

High Drums  $\frac{4}{4}$  —

Shekere  $\frac{4}{4}$  —

Cowbell  $\frac{4}{4}$  —

Double Bell  $\frac{4}{4}$  —

UPP of Choice  $\frac{4}{4}$  —

U - - ja - maa U - - ja - maa

U mo - ja U - mo - ja U -

U - ji - ma U - ji - ma

Ni - a Ni - a Ni - a Ni - a

Ku - gi - cha - gu - li - a Ku - gi - cha - gu - li - a

I - ma - ni I - ma - ni

Kuum - ba Kuum - ba